



U.S. Coast Guard History Program

USS *ALBIREO*

AK-90

USS *Albireo* was named after a star in the constellation Cygnus. It was one of the Navy's Liberty Ships re-classified as Crater-class cargo ship manned by the U.S. Coast Guard during World War II. Many of these type cargo ships participated in various landings in the European and Pacific theatres.

Builder: Permanente Metals Corporation, Richmond, CA.

Launched: March 28, 1943

Decommissioned: July 5, 1946

Length: 441 feet 6 inches

Navigation draft: 28 feet 4 inches

Beam: 56 feet 11 inches

Displacement: 14, 246 tons

Propulsion: Unknown

Shaft horsepower: Unknown

Maximum speed: 11.7 knots

Economical speed: Unknown

Screw: Unknown

Fuel capacity: Unknown

Water capacity: Unknown

Endurance (@ 8 knots): Unknown

Complement: 206 person crew

Electronics: N/A

Coast Guard history:

USS Albireo performed several towing operations through hazardous waters from May to August 1943. Its mission included carrying cargo for advanced shore bases and floating units. *Albireo* operated out of San Francisco, transported personnel and cargo to Pearl Harbor, Espiritu Santo, Guadalcanal Manus, New Guinea, the Philippines and, during late 1945, to Japan.

On one voyage, *Albireo* traveled approximately 6,000 miles, escorting a ship through submarine infested waters. Warned that a submarine was trailing the ship and its tow, Commander, C.L. Manzano, the ships captain, zig-zagged in

adverse seas at a rate of three knots for several days to avoid detection. He was awarded the Seamanship Medal for this feat.

On another voyage, the vessel was part of an eight-vessel convoy that towed a large supply to the Admiralties in June 1944. The convoy traveled 7,199 miles in 50 days at an average speed of 5.97 knots, without stopping for fuel or repairs. The last 1,000 miles were through submarine infested waters. The journey was made without the assistance of surface escorts, air coverage, and submarine detecting aids or depth charge equipment. However, *Alberio* didn't always have luck on its side.

On May 12, 1945, while traveling by itself to from Pearl Harbor to San Francisco, *Albireo* encountered and attacked an enemy submarine. Not knowing if it was damaged, *Albireo* tracked what appeared to be the target on radar for several hours. Three other vessels joined in the search, but it is unknown if the submarine was ever found. *Albeiro's* captain received a letter of commendation from the Commander, Western Sea Frontier.

USS *Albireo* was decommissioned July 5, 1946.

Sources:

Cutter History File, Coast Guard Historian's Office.

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships. Washington, DC: USGPO.

